1: Nimuendaju E-5 (1929-1936) 1946 SO8 Timbira SO8

Apart from disturbances of this sort and others due to the men's intoxication, marital life pursues an extraordinarily even course. Matrilocal residence safeguards women from their husbands' tyranny, while the manifold masculine organizations militate against henpecking. No woman ever tries to keep her husband from taking part in performances of his organizations; and no man forbids his wife to join in all of the three daily dances. Undoubtedly the multiplicity of ceremonial units tends to separate spouses and promotes each one's acting independently of the other. Man and wife never proceed to a festival or ceremony jointly, each going by himself whenever his presence is required.

Many a Neobrazilian neighbor acts as though he had difficulty avoiding fornication with Indian girls constantly offered by their fathers. Snethlage[99] thus heard about a mulatto alleged to have secured the *jus primae noctis* of all the virgins in a Krahō′ village in return for an annual payment of a dozen head of cattle. In 1936 I spent a fortnight in the Krahō′ village of Pedra Branca. When I was about to leave, the inhabitants and, above all, chief Vicente Kratpē′ made every effort to attach me to the tribe, for they had grasped my attitude toward ancient Indian usage and wanted to use me to oppose the Baptist missionaries. I was requested to wait until after a certain festival, but I answered that time would not permit this. Then the chief offered me a girl; I declined. In the evening he and his wife came to me with two girls of whom I was to select the one I liked better. However, both were village wantons, daughters of the chief's sister; and he offered them to me not because I was a transient visitor, but in my capacity of a prospective fellow tribesman and champion of tribal tradition.

On the other hand, I have known a Ramkō′kamekra who kept two young wantons, the daughters of a deceased sister, in his matrilineal home, and sold their favors to Neobrazilians. But when people began to gossip about his behavior, it was so vigorously condemned that he felt obliged to forego this source of income.

According to my observation young girls are the very ones to display a marked repugnance to Neobrazilians, especially if dark skinned and frizzy haired, since these strangers depart widely from the native ideal of manly beauty. Their clothing repels the lasses, their easy-going, sauntering gait seems ridiculous since a kind of dogtrot is prized as the acme of youthful dash; and altogether the inquisitive outsiders prove a disturbing element. If a Neobrazilian joins a bevy of girls, they soon begin to pass surly comments, and the one who best controls Portuguese speech bluntly asks what he wants and bids him depart. They delight in lying to such men, telling them the Indian men are likely to kill them, etc.

It is nevertheless quite possible that older wantons and perhaps an occasional married woman will yield access to civilized men; such cases hardly ever occur in the settlement, but only when the Indians scatter over their territory in small groups during the season before the ripening of the crops. At that time they are everywhere surrounded and hemmed in by Neobrazilians, camp in their immediate vicinity, and associate with them. Further, there was one woman in Ponto who was about thirty years old and was known to the Neobrazilians as Romana. She often spent weeks among them, was the only native woman addicted to drink, and had free intercourse with neighbors; the Indians shunned her, I think, from fear of venereal diseases.

WANTONS

The wantons (mentíapeyti) form—apparently among all those Timbira tribes that are still tolerably numerous and well organized—a recognized, though not organized class. According to old custom, girls are wantons if they did not marry as

[99] Snethlage, Nordostbras. 170.